

The Way of the Lord

13. Your Relationship With Your Father (Part 4)

In our last video segment we made clear that our Father in heaven *adopted* you to be His child. As His child, He intends for you to live a life of trust-based obedience in the pattern of the Hebrew Patriarch, Abraham. As you continue to trust your heavenly Father, He'll lead you into a life of *transformation*—helping you become more and more like His Son Jesus.

Abraham left behind all the earthly things he once held dear in order to obey God. Father will do whatever is needed for that same lifestyle of obedient trust to become yours as well. Initially you may not *want* your Father's primary way of transforming you. But in time you'll learn to embrace it as you see yourself being filled with the love and character of your Lord Jesus. So what *is* Father's chief refining tool in your life?

Your heavenly Father uses SUFFERING to transform you.

- *“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now IF we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, IF indeed we share in His SUFFERINGS in order that we may also share in His glory”* (Romans 8:16-17).

- *“To this YOU were called, because Christ SUFFERED for YOU, leaving YOU an example, that YOU should follow in His steps”* (1 Peter 2:21).

You may have recognized already that your sin nature detests *any* and *all* forms of suffering. Maybe you've had a negative reaction to what we just shared. But along with your acceptance of your Father's Covenant comes His use of suffering to help you be changed.

Keep in mind that Jesus, Whose character we're called to grow in, *suffered*. Should our Father treat YOU any differently by withholding the very thing that helps YOU become like His Son Jesus? *“In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for Whom and through Whom everything exists, should make the Author of their salvation perfect through SUFFERING”* (Hebrews 2:10).

It may be hard for you to accept your Father's use of suffering in your life. But your doubt may come because you don't realize just how *depraved* your sin nature really is! Our Father accepted you in Covenant union in Christ fully knowing that your sin nature *resists* obeying Him. But He knows you better than you know yourself. That's why you need to *fully trust* Him and His use of suffering to transform you. HE's the Potter, and YOU are His beloved clay.

- *“Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker... Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making’?...”* (Isaiah 45:9).

- *“Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?”* (Romans 9:21).

It's futile for your spiritual growth to argue with or resist your Father's way of developing the character of His Son in you. Picture your heavenly Father as the perfect, divine parent. As with any parent/child relationship, *discipline* is needed for a child to grow into a fully responsible adult. You may have experienced some awful

disciplining practices from your earthly parents. But don't let that keep you from embracing the necessary discipline of your *heavenly* Father Who personifies *love* beyond our understanding.

Discipline is essential! It imparts responsible character qualities that can guide all your motives and actions. *"Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of RIGHTEOUSNESS and PEACE for those who have been trained by it"* (Hebrews 12:10,11).

Is that clear now? Your heavenly Father shows His *love* for you through His willingness to *discipline* you. And His discipline has a wonderful goal—for you to become more like His Son, Jesus. You noticed that your Father's discipline produces a harvest of *righteousness and peace* IF you accept it and are trained by it. Your Father will use all kinds of painful circumstances as He confronts your sin nature so you can become more like Jesus.

This is how He *disciplines* you, because you're His beloved child. His Spirit in you produces peace as you *trust* Him through these character developing situations rather than resist Him. The peace of Christ comes as you embrace the painful circumstance as His trusting child, and cooperate with Him in using these difficulties to instill His character qualities in you.

We realize that the truths we've shared in this video may be hard for you to hear, especially if you've complacently sat back in a religious system hearing pleasantries that didn't stir you to change. But if you yearn to become more like Jesus and joyfully take up your purposes in His Kingdom, the suffering that *transforms* you is the way of the Lord.

For Further Study:

- Teaching E-mail 27. Breaking The Chain Of Sin And Strongholds
- Teaching E-mail 32. Are You Trusted By Your Family?
- Teaching E-mail 45. Do You Understand The Kingdom?
- Jesus In Your Home Bytesize: 76. Children—Born With A Sin Nature (Part 1)
- Jesus In Your Home Bytesize: 77. Children—Born With A Sin Nature (Part 2)

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